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ABSTRACT

Boom! Br-r-ring! Cluck! Moo!--exciting sounds are everywhere. Whether visiting online sites that play sounds or taking a "sound hike," ask your students to notice the sounds they hear, then write their own book, using sound words, based on Dr. Seuss's "Mr. Brown Can MOO! Can You?" During the three 45-minute sessions, grade K-2 students will: explore the connection with between letters and letter combinations (graphemes) and sounds (phonemes) by identifying sound words, or onomatopoeia, in texts they hear (or read) and matching words to sounds they hear; explore a variety of strategies to spell the sound words that they associate with sounds they've heard; and compose books that focuses on sound words. The instructional plan, lists of web resources, student assessment/reflection activities, and a list of National Council of Teachers of English/International Reading Association (NCTE/IRA) Standards addressed in the lesson are included. A brainstorming sound words handout; a sound observation chart; example sound words; and a 16-item list of books that feature sound words are attached. (RS)

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Dr. Seuss's Sound Words: Playing with Phonics and Spelling

ED 480 261

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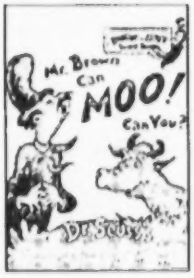
Grade Band

K-2

Estimated Lesson Time

Three 45-minute sessions

Overview



Boom! Br-r-ring! Cluck! Moo!—Everywhere you turn, you're bound to find exciting sounds. Whether you visit online sites that play sounds or take a sound hike at school, a near-by park, or on a field trip, ask your students to notice the sounds they hear then write their own book, using sound words, based on Dr. Seuss's *Mr. Brown Can MOO! Can You?*

By focusing on these sound words, this lesson helps students develop spelling strategies that help them move from phonemes, the sounds they make, to graphemes, the written representations of those sounds.

From Theory to Practice

Playing with the meaning and spelling of sounds comes easily to children. A child's first sounds and words come from playful repetition, gurgling, and babbling. As Nikola-Lisa explains, "The repetition of key sounds or words is instrumental in helping young children learn the sounds of language, ultimately enabling them to associate sounds with their respective graphemes"(p. 169).

To explain further, a grapheme is a unit in written language—in other words, a letter of the alphabet or letter combinations such as sh- or -ow. Graphemes are the written equivalent of phonemes. A phoneme is what you might hear or say while a grapheme is what you write. As students focus on sound words, they begin with their ability to hear and mimic the sounds that they hear. From this beginning step, students move on to use spelling strategies to create the graphemes that represent those sounds. As outlined by Bouffler (1984), primary students will likely focus on spelling as it sounds, spelling as it sounds out, spelling as it articulates, spelling as it means (as explained in Laminack and Wood, 13-15).

Read More:

Nikola-Lisa, W. 1997. "Sound and Sense in Children's Picture Books." *Language Arts* 7.43. 168-171. http://www.ncte.org/pdfs/members-only/la/0743-march97/LA0743Sound.pdf

Laminack, Lester L., and Katie Wood. 1996. *Spelling in Use: Looking Closely at Spelling in Whole Language Classrooms*. Urbana: NCTE.

Student Objectives

Students will:

- explore the connection with between letters and letter combinations (graphemes) and sounds (phonemes) by identifying sound words, or onomatopoeia, in texts they hear (or read) and matching words to sounds they hear.

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- explore a variety of strategies to spell the sound words that they associate with sounds they've heard.
- compose books that focuses on sound words.

Resources

- Dr. Seuss Overhead
- Brainstorming Sound Words Handout
- Sound Observation Chart
- Example Sound Words
- Dr. Seuss's *Mr. Brown Can MOO! Can You?*, or a similar picture book that focuses on sound words.
- General classroom supplies.
- Internet connection and Web access.
- Tape recorder (optional).

Instructional Plan

Preparation:

- Dr. Seuss's *Mr. Brown Can MOO! Can You?* (Random House 1970), or another picture book that features sound words (onomatopoeia).
- Internet connection and access to Web pages that feature sounds.
- (Optional) Tape recorder, to record sounds heard on a sound hike or on the Internet.
- General classroom supplies (paper, pens, pencils, markers, and so forth).

Instruction and Activities:

Session One:

1. Read *Mr. Brown Can MOO! Can You?* to students to familiarize them with the story before you begin looking for examples of sound words. Allow time for discussion of the book, and to answer any questions students have.
2. Once you've read and discussed the book, explain that you're going to read the book again and look for examples of sound words. You'll also think about the reasons that Dr. Seuss used the words he did.
3. Read the first page of *Mr. Brown Can MOO! Can You?* Ideally, students should be able to see the text as you're thinking aloud. If class size makes it difficult for everyone to see what you're reading, photocopy the page and make an overhead transparency for students to look at, or use this PDF version of the text of the first page.
4. Demonstrate how to find and think about the purpose of the sound words using that page as an example:

> **Think Aloud:** Most of these lines just describe Mr. Brown and what he can do. Mr. Brown can make wonderful sounds, and one of the sounds is just "like a cow." The sound words are "Moo Moo." Dr. Seuss could have just said "He can go like a cow," but instead, Dr. Seuss adds the line "He can go Moo Moo." Without the "Moo Moo," I'd have to guess what sounds Mr. Brown makes. Cows make noises other than mooing — they could make a noise when they're running, they could make a sound when they're chewing, and they could make a noise when they're eating or getting a drink of water. If Dr. Seuss didn't say exactly which word it was, we'd have to guess.

Sound Word and Purpose: The word "Moo"on the first page of Dr. Seuss's book uses sound words to make it clear exactly what sounds both Mr. Brown and a cow make.

5. Answer any questions students have about sound words before reading the rest of the book.
6. As you read the book, pause on every other page. This lets you focus on two-page spreads (for instance, pages 2 and 3, pages 4 and 5, and so forth). Ask students to help you locate the sound words on the two-page spreads.
7. Once you've read through the book, display the list of sound words on the board on white paper, or on an overhead projector. Alternately, you might make an overhead using the last two pages of the book.
8. With students, examine the list and identify what things make each sound. Partially, students will be demonstrating memory by recalling the item in the book that makes the sound, but they might also brainstorm alternate items that make the sounds. For instance, the sound "Boom! Boom!" in the book is associated with thunder. However that sound might also be someone beating on a big drum.
9. After you've identified all the words in the book, play with sounds in the classroom that you can identify and add to the list. For instance, does the heater or fan in your classroom make a noise? What about the windows or door? Is there a sound when you drag a chair across the floor? Have students as a whole group think of things that make sounds in the classroom and then create words that capture those sounds. A list of sample sound words may help you get started.

Optional Alternative
Have students brainstorm a list of at least five sound words that describe the sounds you associate with each the following items or events. Ask students to think about the reasons for the words that they choose. Provide students with copies of the handout to record their observations on and write the information on the board in table form, like this:

Item or Event	Sound Words	Reasons
The school hallway between classes		
The sound of a thunderstorm		
Traffic on a busy street		

Session Two:

1. Add Web sites or other resources to the list of sites that students can explore for this assignment, or add them to the favorites on the computer's Internet browser. The following Web sites work can work well for this assignment:

National Geographic Sights & Sounds, The Bering Sea
http://www.nationalgeographic.com/wildworld/beringsea/index.html

National Geographic Sights & Sounds, Southwestern Amazonian Moist Forest
http://www.nationalgeographic.com/wildworld/amazon/index.html

Or choose one of the Animal Profiles from the center of the National Geographic Animals and Nature page
http://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/

Beautiful Sounds of Korea
http://www.korea.net/learnaboutkorea/library/sound_seasons.html

Orca Live
http://www.orca-live.net/
Live cam with clips of orcas available only seasonally

Discovery Channel Live Cams
http://dsc.discovery.com/cams/cams.html
(check the individual cameras to narrow your focus to choices appropriate for your students)

If you decide to search for additional resources, pay particular attention to whether the sites have sound clips of the subject that they focus on. For instance, only two of the National Geographic Sight & Sound Web sites (those listed on the student handout) include related sound clips of the animals in the areas explored. The other sites have video clips, and some have audio clips of scientists in the field; however, they do not include sounds of the particular place explored. In addition to exploring animals and habitats, you might have students consider very different places or events — a football game, a marathon, or an afternoon at a farmer's market.

Optional Alternative
Instead of exploring sounds on the Internet, take students on a sound hike around the school. Depending upon the weather, you might explore near-by areas outside (be sure to get permission from parents or guardians and from the school administration before leaving school property). If you choose this option, it will help to carry a tape recorder along and record any sounds that students want to use so that they can replay those sounds in the classroom as they work.

2. Divide students into group, and distribute copies of the Sound Observation Chart. They'll use this chart to record their observations. Here's an example you can share on the board to get students started:

What Were You Listening To?	**What Sound Words Describe It?**
Example: *Barn Owl*	*Hoo Hoo*

3. Have groups add a third column to their charts and brainstorm details in this column about the animal or location that they've explored. Here's an example to share:

What Were You Listening To?	**What Sound Words Describe It?**	**What Related Details Do You Know?**
Example: *Barn Owl*	*Hoo Hoo*	*eat mice, fly at night, live in trees and buildings*

4. Circulate the room while students work. As you notice students having difficulty deciding how to write down a sound that they hear, introduce alternative strategies that may help them—for

instance, you might help students change from sounding a word out to thinking of alternative words or sounds they know, using phonetic spelling or articulatory strategies (see Laminack and Wood for more details).

5. Allow them plenty of time to explore the sounds they are including on their charts. Allow students to replay the sounds on the pages or on the tape recorder as many times as necessary to pinpoint the sound word that they want.

6. Collect the groups sound charts so that you're certain they'll have the lists for the third session (to avoid circumstances where the list is misplaced or left at home).

Session Three:

1. Explain the writing project to students. There are two basic options here—though there are many more options you might explore. Here, students either write their own group books based on *Mr. Brown Can MOO! Can You?* or write cinquain poems (see the Composing Cinquain Poems lesson for more information). Alternately, students might write haiku or other types of poems.

2. Distribute the sound charts from the previous session to the groups.

3. Write information about the pattern for the books each group will write on the board.

   Books Based on *Mr. Brown Can MOO! Can You?*
   Use the book with suggestions from your class to outline the format. The overriding format for the book is simply "Mr. Brown can _____ like _____. Can You?" Groups will fill in the blanks with the sounds and what makes them. The noun *Mr. Brown* might be replaced by group member's names or "Our class" or "Our group."

   Cinquain Poems
   Cinquain (pronounced "cin-kain") is a five-line poetic form, using a wavelike syllable count of two-four-six-eight-two. If you choose this option, each student in the group could write a cinquain or two about one of the places they visited or things that they heard. Then the ail the pages they're created can be assembled into a group book.

   Outline the cinquain (below) for students on the board or using the graphic organizer

Line 1:	One or two words that tells what the poem is about—this might be "Hallway," "Monkeys," or "Whales"
Line 2:	Two words—one that describes the kind of sound (loud, soft, etc.) and the sound word itself
Line 3:	Three sound words related to the subject
Line 4:	Four to six words describing the sound and using sound words
Line 5:	One or two words that rename what the poem is about (a synonym)

   Here's an example:

   Rain Forest
   loud chirping
   clapping, clicking, cawing
   dripping, gurgling water
   Loud Place!

4. Generally, students should use their sound charts to compose the group poems; however, if they need to return to the Web page or tape recorder, make them available.

5. Once students have composed their own poems, they'll share with the class. These pieces rely on sound words and are meant to be shared aloud! If students need additional time, share the pieces during the next class session.

Web Resources:

Basic Reading of Sound Words-Onomatopoeia
http://www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/2000/5/00.05.11.x.html
This K-5 lesson plan, part of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute resources, explores additional options for talking about sound words, or onomatopoeia with your students.

Sounds of the World's Animals
http://www.georgetown.edu/faculty/ballc/animals/
Without actually using audio files, this site explains much about sounds and how the spelling and interpretation of things that are heard changes around the world. As the site explains, "Animals make much the same sounds around the world, but each language expresses them differently. English and French cows sound the same, but not in English and French!"

Seussville Reading Game Interactive
http://www.seussville.com/seussville/university/reading/games/
This game at the Seussville site works on letter recognition, using sentences from *Mr. Brown Can MOO! Can You?*

Student Assessment/Reflections

Feedback for this lesson should be ongoing, integrated with the students' composing process. It's not something that occurs after the project is completed, but while students are working. Since the focus is on the strategies and processes students use, feedback and reflection takes the form of kidwatching and specific commentary that helps students expand and extend their language strategies.

As students complete their lists, ask them to think aloud, telling you about their composing. Discuss the graphemes they have chosen as evidence of what Laminack and Wood call "spelling in use." Ask students how they decided on the particular word(s) that they have recorded for various sounds, for instance. As you observe how students move from heard sounds to phonemes to graphemes, you can suggest additional strategies as either a part of this lesson or in future lessons: especially if you notice the majority of students are using a limited number of strategies as they move through this process, A basic observation checksheet can help focus your feedback and document students' current language development.

The spelling students use in their books or poems should never be evaluated for adherence to a mechanical sense of "right" and "wrong." As the *Sounds of the World's Animals* site underscores, there is no one way to spell and express the sounds that an animal makes. Nor is there a single correct way to spell the sounds of machines or people. As a result, students' spelling should be observed with an analytical eye that searches for the strategies that students are using and works to help students understand, name, and expand the strategies available to them (see Laminack and Wood, pp. 10-13).

NCTE/IRA Standards

4 - Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.

6 - Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and nonprint texts.

12 - Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

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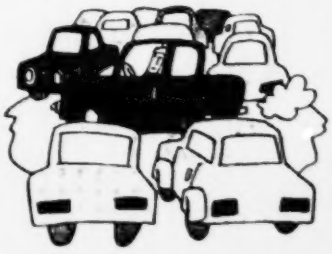
Item or Event	Sound Words	Reasons
The school hallway after school		
The sound of a thunderstorm		
Traffic on a busy street 		

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Sound Observation Chart

Group Members' Names:

_____

What Web site did your group visit?

_____

What Were You Listening To?	What Sound Words Describe It?	What Related Details Do You Know?
example *Barn Owl*	*Hoo Hoo*	*eat mice, fly at night, live in trees and buildings*

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Example Sound Words

babble	fizz	scrunch	thud
bang	fizzle	shush	thwack
boom	flutter	siss	tinkle
burr	hiss	sizzle	twang
buzz	howl	slosh	twitter
chirp	hum	smack	varoom
chirrup	jangle	sniff	whack
clack	jingle	snuffle	whap
clang	murmur	splash	wheeze
clatter	patter	splat	whine
clipclop	pop	splatter	whish
clitter	pow	splosh	whomp
crack	rap	sputter	whoosh
crash	ratatattat	squawk	zap
creak	rattle	squeak	zing
crick	scratch	squish	zip
crinkle	screech	swish	
crunch	scritch	tap	

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Books that Feature Sound Words, or Onomatopoeia

Archambault, John, and Lois Ehlert. 2000. *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom.* Aladdian Library.

Berkes, Marianne. 2000. *Marsh Music.* Millbrook.

Bond, Rebecca. 2000. *Bravo, Maurice!* Little, Brown and Company.

Climo, Shirley. 1993. *The Korean Cinderella.* Harper Collins.

Crebbin, June. 1998. Cows in the Kitchen. Candlewick Press.

Cronin, Doreen. 2001. *Click, Clack, Moo: Cows That Type.* Simon & Schuster

Cronin, Doreen. 2002. *Giggle, Giggle, Quack.* Simon & Schuster

Dr. Seuss. 2000. *Gerald McBoing Boing.* Random House.

Gollub, Matthew. 2000. *The Jazz Fly: Starring the Jazz Bugs.* Tortuga.

McKissack, Patricia. 1988. *Mirandy and Brother Wind.* Knopf.

Murphy, Jill. 1992. *Peace At Last.* Dial Books.

Pinkney, Brian. 1995. *JoJo's Flying Side Kick.* Simon and Schuster.

Raschka, Chris. 1992. *Charlie Parker Played Be Bop!* Orchard Books.

Spence, Rob, and Amy Spence. 1999. *Clickety Clack.* Viking.

Walton, Rick. 2000. *Little Dogs Say "Rough!"* Putnam.

Also worth noting:

Silverstein, Shel. 1978. *Lafcadio, the Lion Who Shot Back.* HarperCollins. (this is a longer, chapter book — that might work well for a read-aloud.)

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